



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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March 11, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich  
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Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: William T Fujioka  
Chief Executive Officer

Lisa M. Garrett  
Director of Personnel

## **STATUS REPORT ON REVIEW OF HUMAN RESOURCES ARCHITECTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES HUMAN RESOURCES STUDY**

On April 20, 2010, on motion of Supervisors Antonovich and Ridley-Thomas your Board directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Director of Personnel (DOP) to: (1) examine Human Resources (HR) architecture, Department of Human Resources (DHR) structure, and determine which HR functions should be centralized and which, if any, should remain decentralized; (2) determine whether human resources positions in the County should be consolidated in DHR; (3) determine the number of human resources positions necessary to support centralization of human resources countywide; and (4) report back to your Board on their findings within 60 days. Previous status reports have been provided on June 22, 2010, August 23, 2010 and December 3, 2010.

On July 27, 2010, your Board approved in concept the findings and recommendations in the County of Los Angeles Human Resources Study (the HR Study), which called for substantive restructuring, modernization, and improvement in the core human resources functions of recruitment, selection, classification, and compensation. The HR Study also advanced recommendations concerning opportunities for improvement in other areas of HR service delivery. In addition to the above, your Board directed the CEO and DOP to: (1) consult with the County's labor groups regarding the study; (2) report back on August 31, 2010 and quarterly thereafter, regarding the progress of implementation plans of the Study recommendations and the next steps in areas such as competency-based testing, score and candidate banking, potential Civil Service rule revisions, class consolidation, centralized and decentralized human resources activities and human

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resources staffing allocations countywide; and (3) report back by November 30, 2010, regarding the results of the pilot project designed to test a streamlined classification, recruitment and examination process and the quality of the candidate pool resulting from the pilot project.

This memorandum provides the status of the pilot project designed to test a streamlined classification, recruitment and examination process and the quality of the candidate pool resulting from the pilot program. In our status report dated December 3, 2010, we reported that the scope and breadth of this pilot project had been notably expanded to “pilot” even more of the key recommendations of the HR Study and, in effect, expedite the implementation of transformation. As such, we will be incorporating status reports on this pilot project (Pilot) into the quarterly reports to your Board on the overall HR Transformation initiatives. Also, we now are projecting a Pilot completion date of November 30, 2011.

### **Definition and Scope of Pilot Study**

This Pilot utilizes the implementation of the Countywide Contracting Occupational Study as a testing ground for the concepts and recommendations of the HR Study, which centers around using a “competency-based” human resources model. In short, this involves streamlining the County’s Classification Plan by reducing (through consolidation) the large number of County classes and defining these classes more broadly, not only based on the assigned duties and responsibilities, but also by the shared competencies required for these positions. Examples of competencies include knowledge of data collection, active listening, and inductive reasoning. This leads naturally to a more streamlined examination and selection process by examining for the cognitive and behavioral competencies needed for successful job performance across a variety of jobs. We are employing these concepts as we implement organizational structures and individual position allocations across the County for the Contracting Study; assess the competency-level of current employees and provide training where skill-deficits are identified; and fill critical vacancies with qualified employees. There are approximately 300 positions in the Contracting Study in approximately 16 County departments. Once this study is implemented, we hope to demonstrate an increased competency in our contracting workforce.

The Pilot work group is comprised of managers and staff from CEO and DHR, as well as the two consultants who conducted the HR Study. This group meets bi-weekly.

### **Status - Classification**

As a result of the HR Study, the classification findings for the Contracting Study had to be revisited. Rather than utilizing new, contract-specific classes, we will be recommending to your Board on the March 15, 2011 agenda that these 300 positions be classified in the existing, more broadly-defined Administrative Services Manager (ASM) series. We are revising these classifications based on HR Study findings so that these classes will serve as a generic series for all non-represented, administrative positions throughout the County. This will provide countywide internal

equity and consistency across the vast County in terms of job allocations and will reduce the number of overall classes in the County's Classification Plan. Our Contracting Study recommendations include re-titling and generalizing an existing County class of Departmental Personnel Technician to Management Analyst, to be used to classify working-level positions in contracting as well as human resources and other sensitive administrative positions. We are also establishing one new class of Administrative Services Division Manager that will serve over time to classify administrative management positions in a variety of administrative functions.

On September 7, 2010, your Board approved the establishment of the first classification designed under this new competency-based methodology: Management Assistant. This is a broad, generic, entry-level professional class that will serve as a "feeder" class for non-represented administrative positions throughout the County. The specification is written in a new format that includes the identification of essential functions; the listing of the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (i.e. competencies); and streamlined minimum requirements. This new format is consistent with state of the industry standards for public jurisdiction job descriptions.

#### **Status – Recruitment and Selection**

The Pilot work group conducted a joint, multi-purpose "job-analysis" (JA) of contracting positions and classifications using the existing ASM series framework. The results of this analysis will be used by the various HR functions of classification, recruitment and selection, training, etc. Previously these functions tended to have their own form of JA, tailored to their specific purposes. This approach was duplicative and inefficient. The JA utilized "generic" competency definitions derived from the U.S. Department of Labor's O\*Net, the new County of Los Angeles Competency Dictionary, and previous studies. This process promises to significantly reduce the time required to conduct a JA, and to make the JA process more consistent countywide. Integral to this process was the participation of various County Contract Managers serving as subject matter experts. Their input was invaluable. Additionally, the results of this JA support the entire recruitment and selection process, helping to frame the job specifications, and to identify valid technical-knowledge tests that will be used to assess the capability of current contracting staff and future candidates for these positions. These tests will be used in conjunction with an established "general abilities" test to fully assess employees for job appointment or training opportunities for a variety of similar jobs.

A special selection process has been developed to provide those County departments who have critical entry-level contracting vacancies with highly-qualified candidates ready for immediate appointment. This involves using the existing eligible list for Administrative Intern (a competency-based exam process) and appointing qualified candidates to the new, above-referenced Management Assistant class. We are pleased to report this process proved effective and three County departments have filled their critical contracting vacancies. We have committed to running an open competitive exam for Administrative Intern/Management Assistant every six months, or as the needs of the service dictate, that will provide a regular opportunity for both internal and external candidates to apply for County employment in these classes.

Finally, we are piloting an alternative to the “AP” process – Appraisal of Promotability, which was recommended for elimination by the Citizen’s Economy & Efficiency Commission. This time-consuming and subjective assessment process was replaced in the current promotional examination process for the *generic* ASM I and ASM II, which took place over the past two months. In its place, applicants were given a well-established, validated assessment of work-style attributes such as conscientiousness, attention to detail, getting along with others, etc., which we believe meets the efficiency and character set forth in the Civil Service rules for promotional exams. This tool provided a much more objective assessment and will greatly reduce the time it takes to complete the examination process. Please note the significant differences in the following comparative data:

	<b>“Old” AP Process</b>	<b>Replacement AP process</b>
Time to administer	Minimum 2-3 months	Scored immediately
Cost per candidate (estimate)	\$525 (staff time)	\$20 (test fee)

Employees who participated in the exams for ASM I and ASM II will be able to “bank” their scores for both the “cognitive” (i.e. data analysis) and “non-cognitive/work-style” (i.e. leadership potential, attitude toward work, etc.) parts of the written exam. Should they choose to apply for the specialized ASM exams for contracting in 2011, they will not be required to take these tests again because their banked scores will be used for the new exam. They will only have to take the newly-created technical-knowledge tests developed specifically for the contract exams. The initial Pilot data indicates that these innovative processes will significantly reduce job post-to-hire timeframes, create efficiencies for candidates and strengthen the County workforce.

#### Timeline – Key dates

The following timeline is provided for the Pilot Project described above:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Departments to fill critical contracting vacancies, using Administrative Intern eligible list and appointing candidates to new Management Assistant classification.	Completed
<b>Generic</b> ASM I & II assessments – replacing AP process	Completed
Implement Countywide Contracting Study (using ASM series)	March 15, 2011
Run <b>specialized</b> ASM exams for contracting to assess current employees for appointment to contracting positions and/or training; NOTE: use of banked-scores for some applicants	April/May, 2011
Provide contracting technical training for applicants who did not pass the technical portion of the exam.	July-September, 2011
Final report to the Board	November 30, 2011

Each Supervisor  
March 11, 2011  
Page 5

Due to the nature of this study, the scope of this Pilot Project has expanded to be quite comprehensive in terms of testing most of the core recommendations of the HR Study. Pilot implementation of these core recommendations will include use of Study recommendations such as using broad class concepts, a new class specification format consistent with public agency industry standards, and validated competency-based testing with score banking to eliminate redundancy. We look forward to reporting back to your Board in May, 2011 with a status on this important Pilot Project and on the status of our review to determine the ideal HR architecture model for the County of Los Angeles.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Ellen Sandt, Deputy Chief Executive Officer at (213) 974-1186 or Lisa Garrett, Director of Personnel at (213) 974-2406.

WTF:EFS  
LMG:SJM:ef

c: All Department Heads